

their signature bill is now a huge tax cut for rich people.

The same Democrats who say they support science and medicine want to slap arbitrary price controls on Americans' prescription drugs, reducing future innovation and, according to experts, literally costing Americans their lives who would have lived if not for this policy.

The same Democrats who pretend they care about Social Security and Medicare want to stretch seniors' existing Medicare Program even thinner. Even though the trust fund is already just a few years away from running dry, they would do this in order to fund new giveaways.

The same Democrats who talk a big game about competing with China want to raise taxes so high that our own American industries would face a higher tax rate than businesses have to pay in communist China.

The same Democrats who are still trying to sneak forms of amnesty into this bill also want to make illegal immigrants eligible for new welfare.

The same Democrats who pretend they are forward-thinking on energy issues want to hammer the U.S. economy with painful regulations while bigger emitters, like China, just keep on emitting—maximum pain for American families and no measurable gain for emissions or the climate.

The bill our colleagues are writing behind closed doors is terrible from top to bottom—more debt, more taxes, more inflation, and fewer options for American families.

This reckless taxing-and-spending spree would hurt families and help China. This radical social takeover is the last thing Americans need and the last thing Americans want. The voters of America just yesterday gave our colleagues a preview of that fact last night. It is not too late. They could still pull back from the brink while they can.

VOTING LAWS

Mr. President, now on one final matter, practically every single week, Senate Democrats make another attempt at grabbing new power over America's elections.

Remember, a giant partisan power grab over voting procedures in every county and State was Democrats' ceremonial first priority of this whole Congress. They revealed their mission from the very start. That first proposal would have sent Federal funds to political campaigns; overridden common-sense State rules, like voter ID; and even changed the Federal Election Commission itself from a neutral referee into a partisan body.

It was so bad—so bad—that even the New York Times called it a flawed bill that was “designed to fail.” That is, of course, exactly what happened here in the Senate, but the Democrats tipped their hand right from the start. They gave away the entire game.

So every time that Washington Democrats make a few changes around

the margins and come back for more bites at the same apple, we know exactly what they are trying to do.

Many of the go-nowhere bills that the Democratic leader has used for political theater had Congress essentially appointing itself—itsself—the Board of Elections on steroids for every county and State in America. Congress was going to micromanage elections to a degree with no precedent.

This new version, today's episode in this ongoing series, is only slightly different. Rather than congressional Democrats trying to grab all the power for themselves, they are instead trying to pull off the power grab on behalf of the Democratic Attorney General. Instead of Washington Democrats and the legislative branch seizing power over elections in the country, it will be Washington Democrats and the executive branch doing the same thing—a slightly different twist on the same concept, but for the same partisan reasons, with the same basic problems.

In order to let Attorney General Garland dictate voting procedures, Democrats want to overturn Supreme Court precedent. Our colleagues' flimsy arguments keep losing in court, so they are now trying to overturn the courts. When States cracked down on the absurd practice of ballot harvesting, Democrats ran to the courts, claiming discrimination, and lost.

When liberals wanted to kill voter ID laws—which are popular with majorities of Black Americans and Hispanic Americans, by the way—they ran to the courts.

What happened?

They lost.

When the Supreme Court ruled in 2013 that one part—just one part—of the 40-year-old Voting Rights Act needed updating, the radical left said the sky was falling and voter turnout would collapse.

Well, of course, the opposite happened. Turnout in 2020 was the highest since 1900. In one recent poll—listen to this—94 percent of voters say voting is easy. Ninety-four percent of voters say voting is easy, and, of course, it is.

Moreover, the Voting Rights Act is still in effect. The courts haven't struck down that law. It is simply false to suggest otherwise. The Supreme Court simply ruled that there was no evidence—no evidence—supporting the continuation of 40-year-old practices that were designed in the mid-1960s to address the specific challenges back then.

There is nothing—nothing—to suggest a sprawling Federal takeover is necessary. Nationalizing our elections is just a multidecade Democratic Party goal in constant search of a justification. Their rationales change constantly, but the end goal never does.

Americans don't need Attorney General Garland ruling over their States' and their counties' elections any more than they need congressional Democrats doing it themselves. So the Senate will reject this go-nowhere bill

today, like we have rejected every other piece of fruit from the same poisonous tree.

This body has real business we should be tackling. The Defense authorization bill is months behind schedule. The majority has been derelict in allowing bipartisan progress on appropriations. These are things we need to be doing.

Every designed-to-fail political showboat comes at the expense of the things that we ought to be working on.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJAN). The Republican whip.

REMEMBERING JEAN ROUNDS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, let me begin this morning by saying how sorry we are to hear the news about the loss of the former First Lady Jean Rounds of the State of South Dakota.

MIKE and Jean have been friends of ours for many, many years. I was involved in Senator ROUNDS' first campaign for office when he ran for State Senate back in 1990. I have known Jean since I worked in the administration of late Governor George Mickelson along with her at the Department of Transportation, and I just can't tell you what a loss it is for the State of South Dakota.

She was an individual who carried herself with incredible grace, always kind, had a humility about her that I think people just found infectious. She was very down-to-earth. She never lost that. As a First Lady, she conducted herself in a way that represented a great model for the State of South Dakota, both in her character and her conduct. The style, the way in which she has served as First Lady, is something that I think made every South Dakotan proud.

So, today, along with all South Dakotans, Kimberley and I mourn her loss. We lift up the Rounds family in our prayers, and I hope and pray that through this time they will feel God's grace and comfort in new and profound ways. But just a tremendous loss, and I know for my colleague MIKE ROUNDS, who has been a great partner of mine—we have been involved in politics together now, in South Dakota, for over 30 years—that he, too, is going to need our support and our prayers in the days ahead.

This is a tough job under ordinary circumstances, but with the burden that he has been and will be carrying now into the future, it is going to be really important that we do everything we can to support him and stand with him, and today especially with him and his family.

ELECTIONS

Mr. President, there is a lot of interpretation about what happened in these off-year elections last night. Obviously, the results in two traditionally Democrat-leaning States are causing people to speculate about what it all means.

And I listened to some of the analysis, and there are lots of armchair quarterbacks who are doing the analysis about what these—what we all

should interpret these results; and, certainly, depending on where you are, you probably, maybe, come to certain different interpretations.

But some of what I heard this morning from a Democrat analyst was that this is evidence that the Democratic Party needs to double down on the big, reckless tax-and-spending bill because people who voted in Virginia and New Jersey last night didn't know what was in it, and when they find out all the good things that are in it, they are going to love this and they are going to want to support Democrats.

And I have to say I think that completely misses the point. I think what people are saying is they don't want to hand the keys to their lives to Washington, DC. This massive, reckless tax-and-spending spree that is being contemplated here by Senate Democrats is historic in its sweep, its expansion, its growth of government, its cost, its pricetag, and it is historic in terms of the amount of taxation that will be put on the backs of the American people in order to pay for it.

And I think what happened last night was a repudiation. It was repudiations of the nanny state and its belief that Washington knows best and that we should get people in this country more dependent upon Washington, DC.

I think what the American people are saying is: We don't want to be more dependent on Washington, DC. We want Washington, DC, to let us live our lives and to focus on the things that are really important to us.

And I think that the issues that were important yesterday had a lot to do with schools and kids and parents and whether or not they feel like they have control over their children's futures and what they learn in schools.

I think it had to do with the economic future that people were looking out as they envision the future for them, for their kids and their grandkids, and they are looking at how stretched their incomes now are because of this growth and inflation.

They are spending more on gasoline. They are spending more, as we head into the winter months, to heat their homes. They are spending more on food. They are spending more on housing. Literally everything in their world that they spend money on is going up, meaning their incomes are stretched thinner and thinner.

So I believe that what people were saying last night is: We don't want more Washington government and less freedom. We want less Washington government and more freedom.

And I think that resounded across the Commonwealth of Virginia and across New Jersey. And I would suggest that the takeaway for Democrats here in Washington should be not we are going to double down, we are going to spend—we are going to ram through in a partisan way this massive tax-and-spending bill; but, rather, let's pull back. Let's see what is happening out there in the economy. Let's see how it

is affecting the average American worker and the average American family and the average American small business, and perhaps head in a slightly different direction that doesn't involve taking more taxes out of our economy and increasing inflation by flooding the zone with more government spending and, therefore, creating higher and higher inflation and ultimately making things more expensive for the American people to where they look at their personal financial situation and realize how much just the cost of inflation is impacting their family budgets on a daily basis, on a weekly basis, on a monthly basis.

That, to me, should be the takeaway coming out of this because I certainly don't believe in any respect that it wasn't that the American people didn't know what is in this massive tax-and-spending bill; rather, it is that they do know. They are finding out what is in it, and they are finding out that these are a lot of—there is a whole ton of spending in here.

And, honestly, you have to be pretty darn creative to figure out how to spend \$3½ to \$4 trillion, and there is a ton of taxing that goes with it.

And there was a study that came out yesterday from Penn Wharton, which suggested that this massive and reckless tax-and-spending bill actually runs over a \$2 trillion deficit over the 10-year period.

If you look at the window, what it says is it is going to cost \$3.9 trillion. This is based on the text that is currently available. And the taxes that are proposed to be raised generate about \$1.5 trillion in revenue; therefore, a \$2.4 trillion addition to the Federal debt, which is already, as we know, at the \$30 trillion range and growing, literally, by the day.

So I would simply suggest to my colleagues here on the other side of the aisle that the message coming out of these elections is not "We want more government for the American people. We want more dependence upon Washington, DC. We want Washington, DC, to do more things for us;" but, rather, "We want Washington, DC, to get out of the way, quit trying to run our lives, and create the conditions that are favorable for economic growth and job creation and higher wages so that we can take care of our families, rather than having to depend upon Washington, DC, to do it."

I hope that this will be the resounding message we need to defeat this massive tax-and-spending bill and allow the American people the freedom they need to lead their lives and to have better opportunities for them, for their kids, and for their grandkids—and better wages.

Mr. President, I understand we have a vote coming up here, so I will yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will re-

sume consideration of the Harris nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Benjamin Harris, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

VOTE ON HARRIS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Harris nomination?

Mr. THUNE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 78, nays 21, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 457 Ex.]

YEAS—78

Baldwin	Graham	Padilla
Barrasso	Grassley	Peters
Bennet	Hassan	Portman
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Blunt	Hickenlooper	Risch
Booker	Hirono	Romney
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Rosen
Burr	Inhofe	Sanders
Cantwell	Johnson	Sasse
Capito	Kaine	Schatz
Cardin	Kelly	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cassidy	Leahy	Smith
Collins	Lee	Stabenow
Coons	Lujan	Tester
Cornyn	Lummis	Thune
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Toomey
Cramer	Markey	Van Hollen
Crapo	McConnell	Warner
Daines	Menendez	Warnock
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wicker
Fischer	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Young

NAYS—21

Blackburn	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Scott (FL)
Braun	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Shelby
Cruz	Marshall	Sullivan
Ernst	Moran	Tillis
Hagerty	Paul	Tuberville

NOT VOTING—1

Rounds

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the Coleman nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Isobel Coleman, of New York, to be a Deputy Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

VOTE ON COLEMAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Coleman nomination?

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?